

Wapanocca

National Wildlife Refuge

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Glen R. Miller, Refuge Manager
Wapanocca NWR
P.O. Box 279
Highway 42 East
Turrell, AR 72384
Phone: 870/343 2595
Fax: 870/343 2416
E-mail: r4rw_ar.bgl@fws.gov

Refuge Facts

- Established: 1961.
- Acres: 5,484. Much of it acquired from the former Wapanocca Outing Club one of the oldest and most prestigious hunting clubs.
- Located in Crittenden County AR, 3 miles from the Mississippi River.
- Other management: two fee title tracts in St. Francis County totaling 509 acres. Adjacent to the city of Turrell.
- Location: from the north: exit I-55 at exit number 23 onto Highway 77 south, 2 miles to Highway 32 east 1/8 mile. From the south: exit I-55 at exit number 21 onto Highway 32 east 1.5 miles.

Natural History

- Refuge lies in the Mississippi Delta protected from the river by the river levee.
- Refuge was once a bend in the Mississippi River.
- Concentrations of wintering and migrating ducks, geese, and raptors.
- Major migration stopover of warblers and other neo-tropical migrants.
- Large great blue heron, common egret, anhinga rookery.
- Active bald eagle nest.
- Open water 600 acres; swamp 1,800 acres; upland hardwoods 900 acres; bottomland hardwoods 500 acres; croplands 1,200 acres; grasslands 400 acres.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Two-person staff.
- 16,000 visitors annually.
- Current budget (FY 98) \$114,000.

Refuge Objectives

- Provide habitat for wintering migratory waterfowl and other birds.
- Provide habitat for nesting wood ducks.
- Provide environmental education and interpretation opportunities to the public.
- Provide recreational (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation) opportunities for the public.

Management Tools

- Water management for waterfowl, marsh and water birds and shorebirds.
- Forest management for neotropical birds.
- Cooperative farming.
- Mechanical/chemical control of undesirable plants.
- Education/interpretation.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.
- Fishery management by water level manipulation.
- Commercial fishing for rough fish.
- Trapping to reduce problem beavers.

Public Use Opportunities

- Nature drive.
- Visitor contact station.
- Observation platform.
- Wildlife observation.
- Fishing.
- Hunting.
- Photography.
- Canoeing.

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Calendar of Events

March: raccoon hunting.

March-September: fishing.

May: peak warbler migration,
Migratory Bird Day.

June: National Fishing Week.

October: National Wildlife Week.

October-November: squirrel/rabbit
hunting.

November: raccoon hunting.

Questions and Answers

When does the lake open?

The lake opens to the public March 15
and closes September 30.

Do you allow camping?

No. There is a campground, “Best
Holiday Trav-L-Park,” along I-55 at
James Mill.

Do you allow hunting?

Yes. Squirrel/rabbits—October 1-
November 15. Raccoon—November
1-15 and March 1-31.

How is fishing?

Fishing is generally fair: Crappie
fishing is good during March and
April. Bass, bream, and catfish
fishing is only fair to poor.

What has happened to the fishing?

Wapanocca Lake does not have a
natural inlet for water to run in and
through the lake to flush the nutrient
load. This results in nutrient overload
which affects PH and oxygen of the
water and consequently is
detrimental to the fish. The fluffy
organic matter on the lake bottom
also prevents ideal spawning success.